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HALIFAX ROUNDTABLE ON US FOREIGN POLICY
SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

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June 15, 2001

8012.6E

ISBN: 0-662-31209-0
E2-428/2001E

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The Halifax Roundtable on US Foreign Policy

Held at Saint Mary's University

In partnership with
The Canadian Center for Foreign Policy Development
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

on Friday, June 15, 2001

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS FROM ROUNDTABLE SESSIONS AND FINAL REPORT

THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE HALIFAX ROUNDTABLE ON AMERICAN FOREIGN (SECURITY AND TRADE) POLICY
Friday, June 15, 2001

The Department of Political Science at Saint Mary's University, in partnership with the Canadian Centre for Foreign Policy Development at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, on June 15, 2001 held a Roundtable on American Foreign Policy. This session, held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, was one in a series of roundtables which surveyed the international implications of recent changes in the US administration. Although the focus was on trade and security issues, the main objective was to identify broad patterns and elements of continuity and change, and implications, challenges and opportunities for Canadian and international foreign policymakers. Participants were encouraged to explore the following themes and questions:

- **Conceptualizing US Foreign Policy and the US View of the World.** Is there evidence of a trend in US foreign policy toward realism, idealism, neo-liberalism, unilateralism, multilateralism, bilateralism, or isolationism?

- **The Changing Role and Influence of American Institutions, Processes and Actors.** To what extent is (or will) US foreign policy formulation be shaped by public opinion, the media, Congress, think-tanks, corporations, pressure groups, and other domestic forces?

- **Defining and Defending US National Interests and Foreign Policy Objectives.** Is there any evidence of a U.S agenda or prioritizing in security, economic, environment, human rights, or other global issue areas or particular regions or groups?

- **U.S. Foreign Policy Capacities and Resources**. To what extent is the US relatively powerful or powerless in responding to, or preventing, military and non-military challenges? What will be the impact of domestic conditions - budgets, tax cuts, political will or other such factors – on the nature and exercise of US power and influence?

- **Changing World Order(s)?** What new relationships and alliances are being formed? Who are the new adversaries? Are there new opportunities and constraints for international organizations, non-governmental organizations, or "middle powers"?

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SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS FROM PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS
(morning session)

Keynote speaker: Dr. James Lindsay,
Senior FellowForeign Policy Studies Program,
Brookings Institution, Washington

I. The Bush administration's worldview and foreign policy priorities

- The Bush administration is essentially committed to maintaining US primacy and flexibility; however, it is not isolationist or unilateralist. It will pursue a "policy of the free hand" to minimize constraints on American freedom to act. (See the Cain report at www.npi.org) The administration does not reject multilateralism. It believes that the post cold war world cannot be governed by "feel good treaties." In its view, multilateralism needs strong leadership (unilateralism?) for others to follow.

- The Bush administration does not have a fully developed conception of how the world has changed in the past decade or what it wants the international community to look like. However, it does share Dick Cheney's view that the international landscape is "infested with weeds, rodents and insects and the last (Clinton) administration did not do a good job of maintaining the grounds." In general there appears to be a deep-rooted hatred of the Clinton administration and anything he stands for.

- Foreign policy was an important issue in the presidential primaries or election and Bush did not say much about it in his campaign. His early priorities revolved around tax cuts. We have not yet seen how much "political blood" Bush is willing to spend for foreign policy. There is generally no domestic political reward for action in foreign policy. Intensely motivated foreign policy interest groups will make Bush pay for pursuing policies they oppose. Bush's administration is currently sorting out which foreign policy issues and interests to accommodate, and on which to take a harder line. Early indications suggest two categories of foreign policy issues:

    1. Issues where the administration is willing to spend "political blood" – for example, National Missile Defense (NMD) and the Kyoto Protocol,
    2. Issues where the administration is "softening" and less willing to spill "political blood", such as the Balkans, the IMF and whether or not to bail out Turkey.

II. The Bush administration's domestic policy priorities and processes

- There are significant limitations placed on the Bush administration's agenda and ability to act. In domestic issues the President generally cannot act until Congress says so and on other (foreign policy) matters the President can act until Congress says no. Any spending of money requires congressional consent. The Democrats have a slim majority in the Senate and therefore control key committees and processes. However, it will be difficult for the Democrats to remain united as Republicans reach out (dole patronage) to more conservative Democratic representatives. Foreign policy matters very little to most representatives and their constituents, and they will vote accordingly.

- There are cleavages within the Administration; it is not a monolith. Rumsfeld, Cheney, Powell, Rice and White House staff represent different worldviews. The State Department and the Defense Department are always at odds. Rumsfeld is not a strong proponent of consultation with allies. Powell is less of a "free hand" person and knows the process and style of communication are important. The State Department and White House staff may want to nudge Bush in a more forward / progressive direction. The Bush administration lacks a notion of "enlightened self interest."

III. Security and National Missile Defense (NMD)

- The Bush administration is preoccupied primarily with threats to *American* (not global) security. Enemies and adversaries of America do exist, though some may not want to believe it.

- The administration is skeptical about the capacity and willingness of international organizations to address and eliminate security threats. It believes its allies will abide by treaties, norms and agreements and its enemies will not. Although the administration is willing to talk to other international actors this is not to be read as a commitment to listen to them or to act on their proposals. Many of those who are publicly opposed are privately supportive of NMD. Six NATO countries support NMD.

- Although the Bush administration has a state-centric view of the world, it is also concerned about ill-defined non-state threats, like terrorism. In its opinion, technology is making it possible for the weak to punish the strong. Non-state or rogue state transcontinental arms / missile threats are particularly problematic.

- The Bush administration is more concerned with the technological challenge of dealing with missile threats than with the broader problems posed by American abrogation of existing antiballistic missile treaties.

- Who gets protected by NMD depends on what technology / missiles are used. A terminal defense is almost impossible to build; a mid-course defense is better but has geo-political fallout and probably would only defend the US and Canada. The new technology leans

toward a boost phase defense – hitting incoming missiles on their way up. This "global" defence –because it targets all missiles regardless of their destination- could help all, but it remains an engineering nightmare. Theatre missile defense, for situations like the Gulf War where SCUD missiles were used, is another option.

- Despite their misgivings, the Democrats will not oppose NMD because to speak against "defending America" would be committing electoral suicide.

IV. On the UN, Kyoto and peacekeeping

- The Republicans are generally hostile towards the UN. However, the Bush administration does not pay much attention to the UN, which is not necessarily a bad thing.

- Kyoto is seen as flawed because,
    1. even if it had been enacted, it would have been inefficient.
    2. Targets are largely unspecified and pushed well into the future making them impossible to measure and reach.
    3. It had no mechanism for bringing developing countries into the treaty.
    4. The two most populous countries in the world, India and China, do not agree with "sanctimonious European opinion" on Kyoto. The Europeans themselves are not making any more progress on emissions.

- A multifaceted strategy is needed. Canada should,

    1. Admit that Kyoto is flawed and its goals unattainable. For example, Russia is already well below its targets.
    2. Propose an alternative to Kyoto – call Bush's bluff. Is Bush willing to act if challenged on his promises to find alternatives to the Protocol?
    3. Proceed with national and regional plans and challenge the US to reach them also.
    4. Focus on reducing nitrous oxide or methane instead of CO2.
    5. Develop alternate strategies like Bianca Jagger's boycott of multinationals.
    6. Cultivate transnational bonds between outraged civil society groups.

- In American politics an unspoken rule is to always concede on principle (i.e., admit that global warming is a problem) in order to remove 'theological' differences between competing positions. While the problem of global warming appears important in the polls, when you dig deeper the mood changes. When Americans are asked how much money they are willing to spend to reduce emissions and global warming public opinion appears to change dramatically. Bush has somewhat undercut the issue of global warming by stating publicly that he wishes to find a solution that will not put Americans out of work.

- It is unlikely that the Administration will commit more to peacekeeping –especially in Africa or Asia - but it will increase operation tempos. The US has a large 'tail to tooth'

ratio; a good portion of the Army's numbers comes from support personnel and not soldiers in the field. It is therefore difficult to put a massive number of people in the field without feeling the crunch at home. Army and Air Force personnel complain more about long campaigns away from their families, more so than the Navy where it is expected to be away for long periods. There is also much more attention to your actions in the field when you are a superpower.

- There is a perception in the US military that there ought to be more of a rationale for peacekeeping operations. The US does not have a great track record when it comes to nationbuilding in Africa or Asia.

V. Canada and US foreign policy priorities and processes

- The change in ministers of Foreign Affairs from Lloyd Axworthy to John Manley is perceived as representing an ideological shift in Canada's foreign policy. Manley is less critical / much more supportive of American foreign policy.

- In terms of which allies have influence, not everyone is equal (Britain, France and Germany are especially important in NATO). Canada does not have veto power over American policy. A critical Canadian stance may not change Bush's mind, but may signal to him that he may have a problem.

- The President and the Prime Minister share a common understanding of political constraints. The ties that bind Canada and the US run deep. We share a culture and the relationship is healthy and robust. There are some issues, like trade, where the US would be more inclined to listen to Canada.

- Much of Canada- US relations take place outside of the government-to-government level. Canada and the US do share a common border, and technology can make cross-border cooperation more possible. Regional and civil society networks are also becoming very important and can be used to put pressure on the Administration.

SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS FROM PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS
(Afternoon session)

Keynote speaker: Michael Dawson,
Deputy Director (Political) US General Relations Division
Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

I. The Administration's worldview on foreign trade policy

- Trade is an important part of the Bush administration's worldview. The US sees the world in a macro-strategic way. Before 1945, US trade policy was an intrinsic part of foreign policy. Increasingly, however, foreign policy and trade policy is being disentangled. Now that they have untied foreign policy from trade policy. There is a fear that the US is abdicating its leadership role and losing ground to the European Union in international trade liberalisation. The FTAA is a high priority. During the WTO talks agricultural issues emerged as important but contentious. The US is also interested in negotiating regional (bilateral or multilateral) trade agreements.

- U.S. Trade Representative, Robert Zoellick, is highly regarded. He believes a few big agreements are better than many small ones. Zoellick insists on a bipartisan consensus (with no congressional amendments) and the inclusion of labour and environmental standards. He feels that labour standards have to be included in all trade agreements and that there must be a strengthening of the International Labour Organization (ILO). Similarly with environmental standards. Environmental reviews must be conducted on trade agreements to ensure that bad environmental practices are not exported or "offshored". Preference will be given to countries that abide by the terms of the agreement –especially on labour and environmental standards.

II. Domestic / Congressional views on trade liberalisation

- These concepts are not an easy sell to Congress. They must approve of new negotiations. The "Byrd amendment" represents a breakdown to the extent that it allows private interests to benefit from anti-dumping policies. 1998 was the first time that the Senate refused to give the President a "fast track" on trade negotiations. New coalitions have to be built. With the recent change in the voting balance of power in the Senate, Democrats now have control of the committee structure. For example Senator Max Baccus chairs the key finance committee. He sees himself as a strong proponent of trade; however, Baccus cannot imagine any trade agreement that does not include environmental and labour standards and insists that preference can only go to those who meet those standards. Furthermore as the new Congress sees it, trade agreements must have clear objectives and must be reversible.

- Trade cannot exist in its own hermetically sealed world –apart from labour or environmental policy- and that is problematic for both Democrats and Republicans. It is a particular problem in the House of Representatives, where elections occur every two years and local social and economic issues dominate. The president may get the "fast track" but to do so he may have to buy off protectionist interests.

III. Trade liberalisation: civil society issues

Policy-makers are comfortable with free trade because in their eyes it amounts to economic democratic growth; however,

- There is a significant difference of opinion between "civil society" and "the state" on so-called 'theological issues', such as the 'net positive gain' of increased trade liberalisation. There does not appear to be any common terrain to resolve it. Unless there is a dialogue the division will likely remain.

- One positive result of the FTAA negotiations was that it was more inclusive of the CARICOM states. The concerns of the CARICOM states were given more weight at Quebec than they have been given in the past.

- National treatment is at the core of every liberalised trade debate, especially on cultural, energy and resource (water) issues. There must be a re-examination of NAFTA's Chapter 11 during the next round of the FTAA trade negotiations.

- In assessing the benefits of hemispheric free trade not enough attention is paid to the unequal benefits gained by particular elites and economic sectors and the disproportionate costs borne by more vulnerable (especially labour) groups. Those whose livelihoods are or may be negatively affected by trade agreements should be consulted and compensated.

- The old political institutions for public consultations are not working and new ones are needed. Civil society organizations have come to the conclusion that there is a large and growing democratic deficit in terms of consultation and transparency. Consultations with governments are designed more as instruments of co-option. A "real" debate on North American and global trade and financial issues must occur.

- There is some debate about the ability of civil society groups to affect policy and governments. Environmental groups used boycotts as a democratically acceptable way of getting governments to listen; for example, European threats to boycott Canadian forest products changed B.C. logging practices.

PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

James M. Lindsay

James M. Lindsay is a Senior Fellow in the Foreign Studies Program at the Brookings Institution, where his main research interests are national missile defense and the domestic politics of foreign policy. He is currently writing a book that examines how demographic, economic, and technological changes are likely to affect the evolution of American foreign policy over the next quarter century.

Before joining Brookings, Dr. Lindsay was a Professor of Political Science at the University of Iowa, where he was an award-winning instructor. In 1996-1997, he was Director for Global Issues and Multilateral Affairs on the staff of the National Security Council. His responsibilities there included UN reform, State Department reorganization, and funding for international affairs. He has also served as a consultant to the United States Commission on National Security/21st Century (Hart-Rudman Commission).

Dr. Lindsay has authored, co-authored, or edited ten books and more than forty journal articles and book chapters on various aspects of American foreign policy and international relations. His books include *Defending America: The Case for Limited National Missile Defense* (with Michael E. O'Hanlon), *Congress and the Politics of US Foreign Policy*, and *Congress and Nuclear Weapons*. He has also contributed articles to the op-ed pages of several major newspapers, including the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*.

Dr. Lindsay holds an A.B. in Economics and Political Science (highest distinction, highest honors) from the University of Michigan and an M.A. M.Phil., and Ph.D. from Yale University.

Michael Dawson

Michael Dawson is the Deputy Director (Political) of the United States Relations Division of DFAIT.

Dr. Dawson received his M.A. and Ph.D. in European History from the University of Toronto. After joining the Foreign Service in 1977, he served from 1978 to 1981 in New Delhi as a junior political and consular officer. On reassignment to Ottawa, he worked on international aviation negotiations and maritime transportation issues. Posted to Moscow as First Secretary (1985-88), he focused on East-West relations, Soviet foreign and strategic policies, and arms control issues, which continued after returning to Ottawa (1988 to 1990) to the Policy Planning Division. In 1990, he served as Deputy Director for NATO policy until posted to Washington from 1991 to 1996, as Counsellor responsible for political-military affairs, including US strategic and nuclear policies, arms control and proliferation issues, and bilateral defence relations, including NORAD and the Permanent Joint Board on Defence. In 1996, he returned to Ottawa as Deputy Director (Political) for UK and Ireland in the Northern Europe Division of DFAIT. He was appointed to his current position in 2000.

Participants

Saint Mary's University, Department of Political Science

Roundtable on American Foreign (Security and Trade) Policy

Friday, June 15, 2001, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

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THE HALIFAX ROUNDTABLE ON AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

Agenda for Friday, June 15, 2001

8:45 AM: Informal breakfast / meeting of participants

9:00AM: Opening Remarks:

Dr. Colin Dodds, President, Saint Mary's University
Chantale Walker, Canadian Center for Foreign Policy Development, DFAIT

9:15AM - 12:15 PM: The Formulation, Evolution and Implications of American National Security Strategy

Chair: Dr. Denis Stairs, Dalhousie University

Presenter: Dr. James Lindsay, Senior Fellow, Foreign Policy Studies Program, Brookings Institution

12:30 – 1:30PM: Lunch (in the McNally Board Room)

1:45 – 4:45 PM: The Formulation, Evolution and Implications of American International Trade Policy

Chair: Dr. Marc Doucet, Saint Mary's University

Presenter: Michael Dawson, Deputy Director (Political): United States General Relations Division, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

4:45 PM: Closing Remarks: Dr. Leonard Preyra, Saint Mary's University

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New Directions in US Foreign Policy

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